

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow. After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 2-10 and 13-33 are now pending in this application.

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given to the claims as well as indicating that claims 8 and 19-22 are allowed.

Pendency of Claim 9

Applicant would like to note that claim 9 is still pending even though it appears from the Office Action dated July 31, 2006 that it was not considered. Consideration of claim 9 is respectfully requested.

Rejection of claims 2-3, 14-15, and 27 under 35 U.S.C. 112

Claims 2-3, 14-15, and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite because claims 4 and 13 do not positively recite “the steering-gear housing” and claim 24 does not positively recite “the vehicle-body member.” Claims 4 and 13 have been amended to positively recite “the steering-gear housing” and claim 24 has been amended to positively recite “the vehicle-body member.” For at least these reasons, favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Rejection of claims 2-4, 6, 10, 13-16, 18, 23-24, 26-28, and 33 based on Muto.

Claims 4, 6, 13, 16, 18, 23-24, 26-28, and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 1,928,316 (“Muto”). Also, claims 2-3, 10, and 14-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Muto. For at least the following reasons, these rejections are traversed.

Independent claims 4, 10, 13, 16, and 23-24 have been amended to include the feature of a “vehicle-body member,” which is not taught or suggested by Muto. Because Muto does not teach or suggest a “vehicle-body member,” claims 4, 10, 13, 16, and 23-24 are not anticipated by or rendered unpatentable over Muto.

Claims 2-3, 6, 14-15, 18, 26-28 and 33 depend from and contain all the features of either claim 4, claim 13, or claim 24, and are allowable therewith for at least the same reasons set forth above without regard to the further patentable features contained therein.

Rejection of claims 5 and 17 based on Muto and Ahrens

Claims 5 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Muto in view of U.S. Patent 4,020,531 ("Ahrens"). Claims 5 and 17 depend from and contain all the features of either claim 4 or claim 13. As previously discussed, Muto does not teach or suggest a "vehicle-body member" as required by claim 4 or 13. Ahrens fails to cure this deficiency. Thus, claims 5 and 17 are allowable over any combination of Muto and Ahrens without regard to the further patentable features contained therein. For at least this reason, favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Allowability of claims 7-9, 19-22, 25, 29-32

Claim 7 has been indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 7 is now allowable because it has been rewritten to include all the limitations of base claim 13 and intervening claim 6. Claim 8 is allowable because it depends from and contains all the limitations of claim 7 without regard to the further patentable features contained therein.

Claim 9 depends from and contains all the limitations of claims 13 and 6, and is allowable therewith for at least the same reasons as claims 13 and 6 without regard to the further patentable features contained therein.

Claims 19-22 have been indicated as allowable by the PTO.

Claims 25 and 29-33 depend from and contains all the limitations of claim 24, and are allowable therewith for at least the same reason as claim 24 without regard to the further patentable features contained therein.

Conclusion

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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